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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicants: Erich C. Vierkant III, et al.  
Application No.: --  
Filed: Herewith  
For:  
Atty. Docket No.: 550299.94186

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT  
UNDER 37 C.F.R. §§1.97 AND 1.98**

MS Patent Application  
Commissioner for Patents  
P. O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313

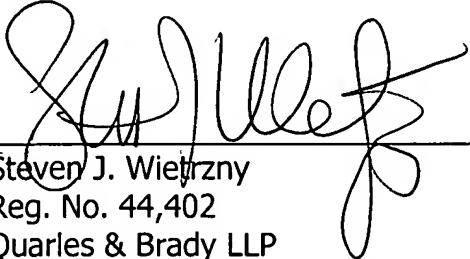
Sir:

This paper is being presented for filing in the above case pursuant to Rules 97 and 98 of the Rules of Practice. A Form PTO-1449 "Information Disclosure Statement by Applicant" is attached which lists the references cited and copies of the non-U.S. patent references are enclosed.

No additional fees for filing this paper are believed to be due. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees due or to credit any overpayment to deposit account no. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 4/1/2004

  
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Substitute for form 1449/PTO

## INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT

(Use as many sheets as necessary)

### Complete if Known

Application Number	
Filing Date	Herewith
First Named Inventor	Erich C. Vierkant III
Art Unit	
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	550299.94186

Sheet 1 of 1

### U. S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Document Number	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
		Number-Kind Code <sup>2</sup> (if known)			
		US- 4,080,671	03/28/1978	Stähli	
		US- 4,133,061	01/09/1979	Hurd	
		US- 4,159,548	07/03/1979	Hewson	
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		US- 4,309,780	01/12/1982	Fantetti	
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		US- 6,381,762	05/07/2002	Moser	
		US-			
		US-			

### FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Examiner Initials*	Cite No. <sup>1</sup>	Foreign Patent Document	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages Or Relevant Figures Appear	T <sup>6</sup>
		Country Code <sup>3</sup> -Number <sup>4</sup> -Kind Code <sup>5</sup> (if known)				

Examiner  
Signature

Date  
Considered

\*EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant. <sup>1</sup> Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). <sup>2</sup> See Kinds Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov) or MPEP 901.04. <sup>3</sup> Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). <sup>4</sup> For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. <sup>5</sup> Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST. 16 if possible. <sup>6</sup> Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

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